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# **Organisational Regulations of the National Research Programmes (NRPs)**

of 14 July 2015

*English is not an official language of Switzerland. This translation is provided for information purposes only and has no legal force.*

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# **Organisational Regulations of the National Research Programmes (NRPs)**

**of 14 July 2015**

The Research Council

based on Article 7 paragraph 1 of the Research and Innovation Promotion Ordinance (RIPO)<sup>1</sup> and on Articles 9 and 15 f. of the Organisational Regulations of the Research Council

issues the following Regulations:

## **Chapter 1 General provisions**

### **Article 1 Scope**

<sup>1</sup> The Organisational Regulations of the National Research Programmes (hereinafter: NRP Regulations) regulate the organisation, tasks and responsibilities relevant to the execution of the National Research Programmes NRPs by the SNSF based on a federal mandate in accordance with Article 10 paragraph 2 letter c RIPA<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> For each NRP, the Research Council appoints an appropriate governance structure, generally a steering committee.

### **Article 2 Principles**

<sup>1</sup> As the party entrusted with funding research in the context of the NRPs, the Programmes division of the Research Council (Article 12 paragraph 1 letter d of the Organisational Regulations of the Research Council) is responsible for the NRP funding scheme and its development at the SNSF.

<sup>2</sup> It has supreme responsibility for the execution of the individual NRPs and, in this role, the tasks and responsibilities listed below. The decision-making powers of the Presiding Board of the Research Council shall take precedence, however.

<sup>3</sup> Tasks and responsibilities are delegated to parties involved in the execution of NRPs in accordance with the provisions set out below, particularly to the steering committee or to the body appointed by the Research Council to govern the NRP in question pursuant to Article 7 paragraph 1 RIPO.

### **Article 3 Parties involved in conducting the NRP**

The parties involved in conducting the NRP are:

- a. the Programmes division of the Research Council;
- b. the delegate of the Research Council;
- c. the steering committee or governing body;

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<sup>1</sup> SR 420.11

<sup>2</sup> SR 420.1

- d. the president of the steering committee or governing body;
- e. the head of knowledge transfer;
- f. the programme manager; and
- g. the representative of the Federal Government.

## **Chapter 2 The Programmes division of the Research Council**

### **Article 4 Tasks and responsibilities**

The Programmes division of the Research Council (hereinafter: the division) has the following tasks and responsibilities, in particular. It

- a. proposes candidates for presidency and membership of the steering committee to the Presiding Board of the Research Council pursuant to Article 8 paragraph 2;
- b. appoints one of its members as the delegate of the Research Council for each NRP;
- c. prepares and approves feasibility studies and calls for proposals for the specific programmes proposed by the SERI and refers them to the Presiding Board of the Research Council;
- d. decides on the recommendations submitted by the delegate of the Research Council on individual research proposals and refers them to the Presiding Board of the Research Council for approval or rejection, as the case may be;
- e. makes the final decision on NRP follow-up proposals at the request of the delegate of the Research Council; the follow-up proposals are generally evaluated as a single batch during the second research phase of an NRP;
- f. approves the budget for the NRP;
- g. periodically takes note of the NRP status reports sent by the delegate of the Research Council and, if necessary, decides appropriate measures. If need be, it may invite the president or another member of the steering committee to attend a Research Council meeting;
- h. approves the management principles and the programme management budget pursuant to Article 10 paragraph 2 letter e;
- i. elects the head of knowledge transfer at the request of the delegate of the Research Council;
- j. decides on the knowledge transfer concept and the corresponding funds (see Article 10 paragraph 2 letter f). It is entitled to examine individual knowledge transfer projects at all times and may decide whether individual projects should be initiated or continued (*ibid*);
- k. decides on the programme synthesis concept and the corresponding funds (see Article 10 paragraph 2 letter g);
- l. decides on any award of mandates requested by the steering committee on the basis of a call for offers (see Article 10 paragraph 2 letter j);
- m. approves the final programme report submitted by the steering committee and discharges the latter;

- n. assesses the final programme report to be submitted to the Federal Council and forwards it to the Presiding Board of the Research Council for endorsement.

## **Chapter 3 Delegates of the Research Council**

### **Article 5 Role and responsibility**

<sup>1</sup> The delegates of the Research Council liaise between the steering committee and the division.

<sup>2</sup> They monitor whether the guidelines and standards issued by the division for conducting NRPs are complied with.

<sup>3</sup> They provide conflict management in the event of any conflicts between parties involved in the NRP.

### **Article 6 Tasks and responsibilities**

The tasks and responsibilities of the delegates of the Research Council are as follows; they

- a. provide the division with the names of candidates recommended for election as president of the steering committee, as other members of the committee or as the head of knowledge transfer;
- b. request that the division approves the decisions and recommendations of the steering committee. If they do not support a decision by the steering committee, they must explain why they disagree with the decision;
- c. at the request of the steering committee, they make the final decisions on individual NRP follow-up proposals requesting a specific amount of funding in order to continue the approved project, while widening its thematic focus within the scope of the project's objectives. The division is informed about their decisions;
- d. periodically send the division a status report on the programme, while also alerting the division in good time to any issues that may require their intervention;
- e. assess the two final programme reports prepared by the president of the steering committee and the programme manager for submission to the Research Council and the Federal Council and refer them to the Research Council for approval or decision. The delegates of the Research Council may add comments to the reports, clearly indicating authorship.

## **Chapter 4 The steering committee**

### **Article 7 Appointment and answerability**

<sup>1</sup> The steering committee is an expert commission appointed by the Presiding Board of the Research Council pursuant to Article 15 f. of the Organisational Regulations of the Research Council.

<sup>2</sup> The steering committee falls under the responsibility of the Programmes division of the Research Council.

## **Article 8      Composition**

<sup>1</sup> The steering committee generally consists of 6 - 8 internationally recognised scientists who have the necessary competence for selecting and acting as advisors for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary projects within the subject area of the relevant NRP.

<sup>2</sup> The presiding board and the members of the steering committee are elected by the Presiding Board of the Research Council in accordance with the provisions stipulated above.

<sup>3</sup> The steering committee may include ad hoc experts should this be necessary to close any gaps. The ad hoc experts recommended by the steering committee or the delegate of the Research Council are elected for a maximum of one year, although a longer period of collaboration is conceivable in justified exceptional cases. Ad hoc experts are personally responsible for their work in the committee, but are not entitled to vote. They fulfil their tasks and are compensated on a par with members of the steering committee.

<sup>4</sup> Members of the steering committee do not submit project proposals and do not participate in the research work undertaken in the NRP.

<sup>5</sup> The provisions governing the steering committee apply mutatis mutandis to other supervisory bodies that the Research Council may appoint pursuant to Article 1 paragraph 2 of the NRP Regulations.

## **Article 9      Role and responsibility**

<sup>1</sup> The steering committee fulfils the mandate awarded by the division to conduct the relevant NRP, and it is responsible for the entire NRP process, from project selection through to the final programme report, in line with the standards, regulations and guidelines of the SNSF.

<sup>2</sup> It is responsible for scientifically assessing and overseeing the projects.

<sup>3</sup> It is responsible for knowledge transfer and, if necessary, organises the publication of a programme synthesis.

## **Article 10      Tasks and responsibilities**

<sup>1</sup> The steering committee appoints a suitable management team for the relevant NRP. This team usually consists of the president of the steering committee, the programme manager and the head of knowledge transfer.

<sup>2</sup> The tasks and responsibilities of the steering committee are as follows; it

- a. makes final decisions on pre-proposals;
- b. recommends the approval or rejection of proposals, which recommendations are subsequently referred to the division as formal requests by the delegates of the Research Council. If the division rejects the recommendations of the steering committee, the matter

is referred back to the steering committee for further deliberation and submission of a new request. The decisions of the Research Council on the approval or rejection of research proposals must be endorsed by the Presiding Board of the Research Council.

- c. monitors the progress made in the research work and assesses the interim and final project reports. If necessary, it may recommend to the division via the delegate of the Research Council that individual projects be refocused or discontinued.
- d. assesses the NRP follow-up proposals pursuant to Article 6 letter c (single proposals with a modified thematic focus) and recommends their approval or rejection to the delegate of the Research Council;
- e. assesses the management principles and submits them to the division together with the programme management budget;
- f. assesses the knowledge transfer concept and refers it to the division for decision. The steering committee is responsible for final approval of the individual knowledge transfer projects within the budget approved by the division. However, the division has the opportunity to make decisions on specific KT projects;
- g. assesses the programme synthesis concept and submits it to the division. Members of the steering committee may play an active role in drafting the programme synthesis and may themselves contribute textual content. If the actual work done by a member of the steering committee considerably exceeds the expected workload, the member will have to be compensated via a separate mandate.
- h. assesses the synthesis as well as any partial syntheses of the programme. As the editor of the synthesis, the steering committee is responsible for its content.
- i. assesses and approves the two final programme reports prepared by the president of the steering committee and the programme manager for submission to the Research Council and the Federal Council and refers them to the division;
- j. if necessary, issues calls for offers, particularly for specific tasks related to the programme synthesis or for studies, and awards mandates to third parties based on the principle of competition. The offers are assessed by the steering committee and recommended by the delegate of the Research Council to the division for approval.

## **Chapter 5 The president of the steering committee**

### **Article 11 Role and responsibility**

<sup>1</sup> The president of the steering committee is responsible for representing the NRP to the outside world. He/she may delegate individual representation duties to other members of the steering committee by agreement with the delegate of the Research Council.

<sup>2</sup> In close collaboration with the delegate of the Research Council and the programme manager, he/she is responsible for scheduling the NRP, particularly the meetings of the steering committee and deadlines, as well as for all programme-related information and communication in line with the goals set for the programme.

## **Article 12 Tasks and responsibilities**

<sup>1</sup> The president of the steering committee is responsible for managing the NRP pursuant to Article 10 paragraph 1 of the NRP Regulations, generally in close collaboration with the responsible programme manager, who provides support on behalf of the Administrative Offices of the SNSF.

<sup>2</sup> The president

- a. chairs the meetings of the steering committee;
- b. periodically reports on the status of the NRP to the delegate of the Research Council;
- c. collaborates closely with the programme manager to refine the objectives of the NRP into workable units, define measures for achieving goals and set benchmarks for assessing goal attainment. The goals defined in the call for proposals of the relevant NRP are binding;
- d. in close collaboration with the programme manager, plans and carries out measures to coordinate the individual research projects in keeping with the programme's goals. For this purpose, he/she drafts the management principles in collaboration with the programme manager. Objectives, measures, processes and the programme budget are set out in the management principles;
- e. in consultation with the programme manager, and after discussing the matter with the steering committee, proposes a candidate for election as head of knowledge transfer. The candidate is elected by the division based on a recommendation by the delegate of the Research Council;
- f. collaborates closely with the programme manager to assist with the drafting of a knowledge transfer concept and submits it to the steering committee for approval. The final decision on the knowledge transfer concept is made by the division based on a recommendation by the delegate of the Research Council;
- g. in close collaboration with the programme manager, supports the implementation of the knowledge transfer projects in line with contractual provisions;
- h. Is responsible for the production from the concept stage through to publication of the programme synthesis should one be envisaged for the relevant NRP. Supported by the steering committee, he/she manages the production process together with the programme manager;
- i. submits to the steering committee a concept for the programme synthesis that is in line with the programme's objectives as well as the budget envisaged for the programme synthesis. The programme synthesis is generally financed via mandates (Article 10 paragraph 2 letter j). The final decision on the programme synthesis is made by the division based on a recommendation by the delegate of the Research Council;
- j. together with the programme manager, participates in drafting the final programme reports to be submitted to the Research Council and the Federal Council.
- k. may not represent the SNSF before third parties without explicit and specific authorisation.

## **Chapter 6 The head of knowledge transfer**



### **Article 13      Role and responsibility**

<sup>1</sup> The head of knowledge transfer manages the NRP's knowledge transfer activities from the concept stage through to the specific exchange/transfer of knowledge with/to stakeholders. Depending on the requirements of the relevant NRP, terms such as "knowledge and technology transfer" or "knowledge exchange" may be used instead of "knowledge transfer".

<sup>2</sup> Unless specifically authorised in writing, the position of "head of knowledge transfer NRP" does not entitle the holder to represent the SNSF to the outside world or third parties.

### **Article 14      Knowledge transfer concept**

<sup>1</sup> The head of knowledge transfer submits a comprehensive knowledge transfer concept for the relevant NRP to the president of the steering committee and the programme manager.

<sup>2</sup> The overall goals, measures and budget for knowledge transfer are set out in this document, which must comply with the SNSF guidelines "Organisation of knowledge transfer (KT) in the NRPs".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The division shall approve the knowledge transfer concept (including the budget) based on a recommendation by the delegate of the Research Council, provided the president of the steering committee and the programme manager had previously approved it and requested the delegate of the Research Council to recommend it to the steering committee for submission.

<sup>4</sup> The knowledge transfer concept is continually developed by the head of knowledge transfer in consultation with the president of the steering committee and the programme manager during the running time of the programme. Requests for additional funding must be referred to the division for approval via the steering committee and the delegate of the Research Council.

<sup>5</sup> The head of knowledge transfer proposes specific knowledge transfer projects to the president of the steering committee and the programme manager. The project proposals must include the objectives and measures as well as a binding offer for the planned activities.

<sup>6</sup> The individual knowledge transfer projects are approved by the steering committee based on a recommendation by the president of the steering committee; the overall budget awarded must not be exceeded. The division is informed accordingly (see Article 10 paragraph 2 letter f).

## **Chapter 7    The programme manager**

### **Article 15      Role and responsibility**

<sup>1</sup> The programme manager is charged with the operational management of the NRP.

<sup>2</sup> He/she is responsible for providing support and advice to the delegate of the Research Council, the steering committee and its president, as well as to the head of knowledge transfer.

<sup>3</sup> He/she is responsible for the continual exchange of information between the parties involved in the NRP and for compliance with the shared principles of implementation applicable to all NRPs as well as with SNSF standards and regulations.

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<sup>3</sup> [Link to the guidelines "Organisation of knowledge transfer \(KT\) in the NRPs"](#)

<sup>4</sup> He/she guarantees the transfer of knowledge acquired in the context of completed and ongoing NRPs.

## **Article 16 Tasks and responsibilities**

<sup>1</sup> The tasks and responsibilities of the programme manager are as follows; he/she

- a. collaborates closely with the delegate of the Research Council to prepare the NRP-related issues to be submitted to the division for decision and approval, participates in the relevant meetings held by the division and is responsible for the operational implementation of the decisions;
- b. runs the secretariat of the steering committee, prepares the meetings of the steering committee, edits the minutes of the meetings and implements the decisions of the steering committee;
- c. is responsible for the operational management of the project evaluation and the issuance of written rulings;
- d. collaborates closely with the president of the steering committee to coordinate the research projects by taking appropriate measures in keeping with the programme's goals. For this purpose, he/she drafts the management principles together with the president of the steering committee. Besides objectives and measures, the relevant processes as well as the programme budget are set out in the management principles;
- e. in close collaboration with the president of the steering committee, assists in the drafting of a knowledge transfer concept and submits it to the steering committee for the attention of the division;
- f. collaborates closely with the president of the steering committee to ensure that knowledge transfer projects (KT projects) are conducted in line with contractual provisions. In so doing, he/she is supported in matters of financial controlling and budget compliance by the relevant personnel at the Administrative Offices;
- g. compiles the programme budget and submits it to the division for approval. He/she monitors whether the budget is complied with;
- h. ensures a well-managed synthesis process in line with the goals set for the NRP;
- i. together with the president of the steering committee, is involved in drafting the final programme reports for submission to the division and the Federal Council.

<sup>2</sup> Unless these Regulations explicitly provide otherwise, the programme manager has, within the scope of funding procedures, the same rights and duties as defined for the scientific secretariats in the Organisational Regulations of the Research Council.

## **Chapter 8 Representatives of the Federal Government**

### **Article 17 Representatives of the Federal Government**

<sup>1</sup> Based on Article 22 paragraph 3 of the Statutes of the SNSF, the SNSF and the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI may decide to give representatives of relevant specialised administrative units a non-voting seat on the steering committee.

<sup>2</sup> In most cases, the Federal Government is represented by one person in each steering committee. The representative is appointed by the SERI.

<sup>3</sup> In consultation with the SNSF, the SERI defines the rights and duties of the representatives of the Federal Government in the steering committees and sets them down in writing in the form of a list of duties.

<sup>4</sup> Members of an SNSF body may not be designated as representatives of the Federal Government.

## **Chapter 9 Final provisions**

### **Article 18 Repeal of existing regulations, and entry into force**

<sup>1</sup> The Regulations for the steering committees of National Research Programmes (NRPs) of 4 February 2009 are repealed subject to Article 19.

<sup>2</sup> The present Regulations enter into force on 14 July 2015.

### **Article 19 Transitional provision**

<sup>1</sup> The Regulations for the steering committees of National Research Programmes (NRPs) of 4 February 2009 continue to apply to ongoing NRPs up to and including NRP 69.